

# Stanley Street gallery

July 2019

## Toni Messiter

Toni Messiter is a painter who began her practice over 20 years ago. Her father, a painter himself, taught Messiter the fundamentals of colour and composition, instilling a deep and enduring adoration for the medium. The theme of adoration is a recurrent in Messiter's practice to which we see the complexity and sometimes conflicting reality of this emotion in her recent solo exhibition, *Beloved*.

There is a nurturing intimacy within one's interaction with dolls that calls to mind notions of childhood and family. To Messiter, the notion of the doll allows for an uncanny re-enactment, where one might objectify and thereby reconcile their emotions. Drawing from the aesthetics of 17<sup>th</sup> Century portraiture and in particular, portraits of the family, Messiter engages with this subject matter by animating the cherub-like figures in expressions and interactions familiar to us. In this way, there is a stylistic affinity for theatrics which dramatically unfold as ruminations on the human condition; presenting subjects that boarder upon absurdity and delight, provocation and enchantment.

In depicting her *Beloved*, Messiter acknowledges that she possesses the dolls in the same way that we feel ownership over the relationships that we forge: connections that through their nurturance are able to teach us not only of love and compassion but also of manipulation and power.

## Artist Statement

'If the planets are in alignment there are times you get to do the things you want. For me that happened when I rented a studio space where I was able to fully discover the joy of painting. Art has always been my passion, but it had always been something I did on my own way. Visual expression influences everything in my physical world. By the time the studio space was mine I was ready to embrace and explore my creative dream. With the wealth of life experiences, I was able to hone my skills and discover my trait. I am settled in this "figurative conversation" and am enabled to express myself in ways for which there are no words'.

## CV

### Solo Exhibitions

2019 *Beloved*, Stanley Street Gallery Darlinghurst  
2017 Clifton School of Arts  
2010 Gallery Aloft  
2005 Rushcutters Bay Gallery  
2002 Rushcutters Bay Gallery  
2001 Rushcutters Bay Gallery

### Group Exhibitions

2014 1 + 2 Artist Studios  
2007 1 + 2 Artist Studios  
2003 Melbourne Art Fair, Rushcutters Bay Gallery  
2002 1 + 2 Artist Studios